

# **API Press Roundtable**

## **May 30, 2006**

### **Background**

Good Morning. It is a pleasure to be here to make a statement on DOE's 2006 Hurricane preparedness activities. I want to thank MMS and API for their efforts in arranging this roundtable. It is partnerships and coordination efforts with organizations such as these that are paramount to helping us respond to an energy crises.

In less than 48 hours the 2006 hurricane season will officially start and for the most part the energy sector has recovered from the 2005 hurricane season. Although we do not have 100 percent of our oil and natural gas off-shore production back online, we have seen significant progress in this sector over the past several months.

The good news is that no refineries remain shut down as a result of the 2005 hurricanes. Our pipelines are operational as well. As you recall, during hurricanes Katrina and Rita, we had 11 and 20 refineries shut down, respectively. Many refineries experienced significant water and wind damage. In addition, several pipelines were also shutdown causing tight supplies of petroleum products throughout much of the nation, particularly the East Coast.

Before I speak to what we have planned for this upcoming season, let me briefly comment on DOE's responsibilities during energy emergencies.

The Department of Energy is the lead Federal agency in the energy sector. In the event of an emergency, DOE produces daily situations reports about the energy infrastructure, deploys staff in the field, facilitates training and planning across state and local government agencies, as well as coordinates exchanges and loans of crude oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserves, and works generally to remove impediments to industry's recovery efforts.

In coordination with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), DOE is tasked with the responsibility of protecting U.S. energy infrastructure, and establishing policies and procedures regarding preparedness for and prevention of attacks to U.S. energy sources and response and recovery due to shortages and disruptions in the supply and delivery of electricity, oil, natural gas, and other forms of energy that impact or threaten to impact large populations in the United States.

DOE's Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability, is the lead for the National Response Plan's Emergency Support Function #12 (ESF#12) – Energy.

The purpose is to help restore damaged energy systems or components during an actual or potential emergency of national significance. We can and do provide expertise, utility coordination, and the collection and distribution of information through Situation Reports. We monitor the energy infrastructure and share information with federal, state, and industry officials and the public. And in coordination with DHS, including FEMA and Coast Guard as well as state, local, and tribal governments, DOE prioritizes plans and actions for the restoration of energy during response and recovery operations.

In addition we work very closely with MMS, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Transportation to make certain energy fuels are available to first responders and American citizens.

### **Plans for the 2006 season**

Since the hurricanes of 2005, the petroleum and other sectors have done a tremendous amount of work to prepare for this coming season. I'll be happy to speak to those efforts in the Q&A, but want to take a moment to speak to the intensive efforts undertaken at the DOE as we prepare ourselves for this summer.

- The DOE hosted the Energy Leadership forum in Tunica, MS on January 19-20, 2006. This first of its kind forum brought together key officials from federal, State and local governments and all portions of the energy sector to share lessons learned and share best practices. An "After-Action" Report was released in February 2006.
- Over the next several weeks, the individual energy sectors will be conducting follow up meetings with electricity and oil and gas industries.

- The DOE will have a much greater numbers of technical and emergency response staff deployed within an affected region and embedded in other federal responding agencies (DHS and FEMA).
  - DOE issued a broad call for ESF-12 volunteers throughout the Department of Energy complex and the response has been outstanding;
  - OE is conducting new ESF-12 training workshops for individuals expected to deploy;
- DOE has also improved its modeling and analytical capability and its visualization capability by working with labs, outside organizations and industry. Currently upgrading OE's visualization room.
- Coordinating with federal agencies such as DHS/FEMA, MMS, DOT, EPA to improve federal response for energy emergencies and that includes participating in the numerous DHS/FEMA Hurricane Preparedness Exercises.

- Of course, we continue to work with States to help them improve their energy assurance plans through the use of the State Energy Assurance Guidelines.
- And the last effort I will mention now is DOE's plan to establish a "toll-free hotline" for 2006 Hurricane Season to allow State/local governments and energy industry to improve communications with DOE during emergencies.

Thank you, that concludes my remarks.